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**WHA Press Guidance
April 12, 2002**

VENEZUELA: RESIGNATION OF CHAVEZ

Question: Can you provide details about yesterday's events?

**HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS VENEZUELANS GATHERED
PEACEFULLY TO REDRESS THEIR GRIEVANCES.**

**THE CHAVEZ GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTED TO SUPPRESS
PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS. CHAVEZ SUPPORTERS ON
ORDERS FIRED ON UNARMED, PEACEFUL PROTESTORS,
RESULTING IN MORE THAN 100 WOUNDED OR KILLED.**

**THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY AND POLICE REFUSED ORDERS
TO FIRE ON PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS AND REFUSED TO
SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATION.**

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**ADDITIONALLY, THE GOVERNMENT PREVENTED FIVE
INDEPENDENT TELEVISION STATIONS FROM REPORTING ON
EVENTS.**

Question: Was yesterday's change of government legal?

**UNDEMOCRATIC ACTIONS COMMITTED OR ENCOURAGED
BY THE CHAVEZ ADMINISTRATION PROVOKED
YESTERDAY'S CRISIS IN VENEZUELA.**

**CHAVEZ RESIGNED THE PRESIDENCY. BEFORE RESIGNING,
HE DISMISSED THE VICE PRESIDENT AND THE CABINET.**

**A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN INSTALLED. THIS
GOVERNMENT HAS PROMISED EARLY ELECTIONS. WE HAVE
EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THIS CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY
WILL BE RESOLVED PEACEFULLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY
BY THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE.**

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Question: What can you tell us about the impact on the oil markets?

**A: OUR FOCUS HAS BEEN ON THE ISSUES RELATED TO THE
CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA. WE HAVE NOTHING
TO ADD ON ANY SPECIFIC COMMERCIAL ISSUE.**

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